

Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission

Full Commission Mtg - Friday, 7 November 2008 at 10 AM

Dane County Hwy Garage, 2302 Fish Hatchery Rd, Madison, WI

1. Chair Karl Nilson called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

2. Roll Call - Commissioners present for all or part of the meeting:

Crawford	Tom	Cornford		Rock (cont)	Terry	Thomas	
	Kersten	Rocksvold	x		Katie	Kuznacic	x
	Vacant				Ben	Coopman	
Dane	Jim	Haefs-Flemming	x	Sauk	Joel	Gaalswijk	x
	Forrest	Van Schwartz			Larry	Volz	x
	Gene	Gray	x		Halsey	Sprecher	x
Grant	Robert	Scallan	x		Rob	Sinklair	
	DuWayne	Carlin	x	Walworth	Allan	Polyock	x
	Margaret	Ruf	x		Jerry	Grant	x
Iowa	Gerald	Dorscheid	x		Richard	Kuhnke	
	Joe	Thomas		Waukesha	Karl	Nilson	x
	Charles	Anderson	x		Richard	Manke	x
Rock	Alan	Sweeney	x		Fritz	Ruf	x

Others present for all or part of the meeting:

Joni Graves (SWWRPC / WRTC Administrator); Amy Seeboth (SWWRPC Associate Planner); Ron Adams, Frank Huntington, and Roger Larson (WisDOT); Ken Lucht (WSOR); Jim Matzinger (Dane County Hwy CPA / WRTC Accountant); Dick Goddard (Pink Lady RTC); Larry Nelson (City of Madison).

3. Motion accepting Graves' certification of the meeting's Public Notice / Grant / Manke / passed unanimously.
4. Motion approving the Agenda prepared by Graves / Volz / F.Ruf / passed unanimously.
5. Graves did not yet have the audiotape from the October meeting when this meeting was noticed.
6. Motion concurring with the Executive Committee's action at its September 2008 meeting, which had approved entering into an agreement with Direct Source for demolition and site cleanup at the Commission's property in Spring Grove, IL, with cost not to exceed \$12,000 / Scallan / F.Ruf / passed unanimously.
7. Public Comment – NA
8. **Correspondence & Communications – 1)** Graves read a September letter from the City of Stoughton requesting clean-up along the corridor and Lucht said that WSOR would like to meet w the City to discuss public safety and encroachments and would like to use this as an opportunity to talk with them; **2)** a sympathy card was given to Graves in memory of her father and she thanked the Commission for its support; **3)** a card was distributed for the family of former Commissioner Art Phillips (Rock County) who had died recently.

REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

9. **Wisconsin & Southern Railroad's Report on Operations – Ken Lucht, WSOR, provided an update on maintenance activities; WSOR's communication towers initiative, which is providing improved capability and an additional phase may extend wireless access to communities / residents along the corridor; plans for a new culvert in the Edgerton area, which will take the Madison Sub out of Commission for two days; Transport 2020 – the Dane County**

Commuter Rail Program, which has been under discussion for a decade and would allow for commuter service – with Lucht recommending that the existing agreement be reviewed and Huntington clarified that the agreement is for freight rail, and allows for commuter, but that would require a separate agreement and some discussion followed. Lucht also spoke to several smaller projects planned for the fall to wrap up the Phase One tie project and said WSOR hopes to move forward with installation of continuous welded rail from Janesville to Milton in the Spring of 2009, if funded in the state budget. He concluded with a brief recap of the October rail inspection for Commissioner and locally-elected officials; Nilson thanked the railroad and commended the attendance for the trip.

10. **WRRTC Financial Report** – *Jim Matzinger, Dane County CPA / WRRTC Accountant, summarized the bills* (catering for the last meeting, most of which was recovered by attendees, two WSOR bills, \$10,800 for demolition of the buildings in Spring Grove, and a Dane Co invoice for accounting services). He also gave an overview of accounts and status of project spending; following question from Huntington, he noted that the additional reimbursement received from EWCRC for the prior project had been allocated to current project.
 - **Motion approving the Treasurer’s Report and payment of bills / Gray / Anderson / passed unanimously.**
 11. **WRRTC Administrator’s Report** – *Joni Graves, SWWRPC Trans. Planner / WRRTC Administrator, presented the regularly scheduled calendar of meetings for 2009, which was adopted by consensus with two changes: JAN 9; **FEB 6 FCOM**; MAR 6; APR 3 (rescheduled to avoid Good Friday); **MAY 8 FCOM**; JUN 5; JUL 10; **AUG 7 FCOM**; SEP 11 (rescheduled to avoid Labor Day weekend); OCT 9; **NOV 6 FCOM**; and DEC 4. Graves gave a Connections 2030 update and said that concerns raised by the Commission had been addressed. She thanked the Commission for its sympathy card and support. Copies of the www.wrrtc.org usage statistics were circulated.*
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- The Commission took a 10 minute break and returned before 11 am.** Nilson returned to public comment and asked F.Ruf, whose son had competed in the Paralympics in Beijing and won a bronze medal in the 1-person keelboat event. He also commented on China’s air quality and investments in infrastructure – especially the focus on rail.
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12. **WisDOT** – *Frank Huntington provided an update on the status of the rail easement through BAAP (Badger Army Ammunition Plant) and options for incorporating it into the publicly-owned system.* He suggested that it could be added to the contract with the WRRTC and WSOR and explained that, although the Pink Lady RTC has been more active in terms of the issue, they do not own any property and are not active in any projects. Nilson asked Dick Goddard, Chair of the Pink Lady RTC, for input and Goddard said he would concur with the recommendation of WisDOT. Goddard also said that another issue is the Merrimac Bridge and that WSOR has committed \$25K for inspection of the bridge, noting that if it were ever assumed by WisDOT it would become a publicly-owned corridor and, at that point, the PLRTC may retire. Huntington said his office has received many communications regarding the proposed conversion to a trail Dane County and several municipalities have passed Resolutions in support of the conversion through the Villages and also of the corridor from Mazomanie north. He said the latter situation is different, in that it is used for the legitimate purpose of storing cars. He was asked if the width would be sufficient to accommodate both uses and said probably, but there are issues with wetlands which could require use of floating bridges to accommodate the trail. Ron Adams, WisDOT, noted that there is also a counterproposal to use line for commuter rail. Huntington concluded that WisDOT’s position remains that it is a priority to keep the corridor intact, but that they will meet with the communities to discuss these other proposals once the issues with BAAP are resolved. Lucht said the Resolutions reference rails-to-trails – not joint uses – and recommended that the communities have a plan for funding the proposed improvements
 13. Graves provided a brief update on the completed demolition and site clean-up on WRRTC property in the Village of Spring Grove, IL, and circulated pictures of the site.
 14. **Update on pending vacating / demolition of structures on rail property in Arena, WI** – Dorscheid said he had met with Steve Foye, Jr., who has removed all of his things from the first two buildings and told him that he could remove his remaining boats on a couple days notice; Dorscheid said he had no Amish contacts, but did have “Ron’s Barn Salvage” in Reedstown and could contact them.
 - Motion authorizing Dorscheid to follow up on options for demolition of the sheds located on Commission property in Arena, WI and to report back to the Commission / Anderson / M.Ruf / passed unanimously.
 15. **Motion adjourning the meeting at 11:24 a.m. / Rocksvold / Manke / passed by consensuses.**